

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-15 AID-05 PC-05 IO-14 /101 W

-----115174 020212Z /20

R 011310Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2173

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

UNCLAS ASUNCION 0439

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PEPR, SHUM, PA

SUBJ: STROESSNER CALLS US HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY A COMMUNIST TROJAN HORSE

REF: STATE 024551

1. ASUNCION PRESS JANUARY 31 CARRIES "JORNAL DO BRASIL" INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT STROESSNER. ASKED FOR PARAGUAY'S POSITION ON PRESIDENT CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY, STROESSNER SAID: "THE OVERWORKED HUMAN RIGHTS THEME, INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM'S TROJAN HORSE (TO SUBVERT OTHER COUNTRIES), MERITS ONLY ONE REPLY FROM US: MY GOVERNMENT RESPECTS ALL RIGHTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAW..." STROESSNER WENT ON TO WARN THAT HE WOULD NOT TOLERATE ANY DISRUPTION OF "PEACE, TRANQUILITY AND ORDER IN THE NAME OF HUMAN RIGHTS."

2. ELSEWHERE IN THE INTERVIEW STROESSNER CATEGORICALLY DENIED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT IS "AUTHORITARIAN." ON THE CONTRARY, HE DECLARED THAT PARAGUAY IS A DEMOCRACY WITH A REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT BASED ON A CONSTITUTION, FREE ELECTIONS, AND A RESPONSIBLE ELECTORATE. HE SAID HE HAD PERSONALLY EXPLAINED THIS TO PRESIDENT CARTER
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DURING HIS SEPTEMBER VISIT TO WASHINGTON, AND THAT THE PRESIDENT THEREFORE IS "THOROUGHLY FAMILIAR" WITH THE PARAGUAYAN POINT OF VIEW.

3. COMMENT: STROESSNER'S CHARACTERIZATION OF OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AS SUPPOSEDLY SERVING COMMUNIST ENDS--WHILE POSSIBLY NOT AN ORIGINAL ONE-- IS A FIRST FOR PARAGUAY. NOTE ALSO THE CONTRAST

BETWEEN HIS OBJECTION OF THE LABEL "AUTHORITARIAN" AND THE
OPENING LINE OF THE DEPARTMENTS' HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT TO CONGRESS
(REFTEL).
WHITE

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NNN

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